

**ST. GEORGE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
WORK MEETING
JANUARY 29, 2015, 4:00 P.M.
ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE ROOM**

PRESENT:

**Mayor Jon Pike
Councilmember Gil Almquist
Councilmember Jimmie Hughes
Councilmember Michele Randall
Councilmember Joe Bowcutt
Councilmember Bette Arial
City Manager Gary Esplin
City Attorney Shawn Guzman
City Recorder Christina Fernandez**

OPENING:

Mayor Pike called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by KC Zeeman and the invocation was offered by Reverend Alex Wilkie. Reverend Wilkie then presented Mayor Pike with a donation for the All Abilities Park.

Mayor Pike mentioned the Local Officials Day conference that he, the Councilmembers and the Youth City Council attended in Salt Lake City.

PRESENTATION AND UPDATE FROM UDOT REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING PROJECTS:

City Manager Gary Esplin commented UDOT has been a great partner.

Public Works Director Cameron Cutler introduced the UDOT representatives. He then presented a PowerPoint presentation covering the following topics: I-15 Underpass; Study Location; Data Collection Sites; Table 1: Shift in Traffic; Table 2: St. George Boulevard 2040 PM Peak Traffic Analysis Summary; Mall Drive Crossing Concept Analysis and Refinement; EA Option 1 – Mall Drive Underpass; EA Option 2 – Mall Drive Tee Into Red Hills Parkway; Option 3 – 1680 East Crossing; Option 4 – Mid Block Crossing; Option 5 – SPIDR; and I-15 Widening Mile Post 8 to 10 with Underpass Improvements.

Kim Manwill with UDOT explained that they are trying to determine when the Mall Drive project can be funded. They can do the widening and think of the cost later. The other option is to put the structure in place at this time for \$5 - \$7 million. Based on triggers for the I-15 corridor, mile posts 8 to 10 are ready to go.

Councilmember Hughes commented that Option 1 does not work for cueing.

Mr. Manwill explained that there a lot of utilities in the Mall Drive area. This will require Red Cliffs Drive and Red Hills Parkway to be lowered and I-15 to be raised.

Rick Torgeson with UDOT explained that they have the funds to do the study right now.

City Manager Gary Esplin commented that if the City is going do something with Mall Drive, it needs to do it at the same time. Funding will have to be determined.

Mr. Torgeson stated that UDOT funded southbound I-15 between exits 4 and 6. He provided an updated on other I-15 projects in the region.

City Manager Gary Esplin asked what will be the bottom line will be for the City.

Mr. Torgeson explained that they will build the bridges from the interstate across.

City Manager Gary Esplin inquired if Washington City is participating as they will benefit. There is a value in having the interchanges protected.

Mr. Torgeson explained that the MPO is contributing \$1.1 million for this project and Washington City is working on Exit 11. This proposal will benefit exits 8 and 10.

Councilmember Almquist inquired about Option 1. He asked Mr. Cutler asked if taking Mall Drive under the freeway was looked into.

Mr. Cutler stated that they looked at taking Mall Drive both under and over the freeway.

Mr. Torgeson explained that the majority of the cost is in raising I-15.

Mayor Pike commented that when it comes to a \$35 million option, there is no way the City can bear the majority of the cost. Additionally, if UDOT cannot fund that option, it should be off the table.

Mr. Torgeson added that he will meet with City Manager Gary Esplin and Mayor Pike to discuss options.

Brandon Anderson with UDOT provided the Council with an update on Bluff Street as well as Dixie MPO Goals and the Bluff Street Environmental Assessment. Three projects were identified that should be looked at. They are St. George Boulevard to Red Hills Parkway, Red Hills Parkway to Winchester Hills and St. George Boulevard to Main Street. Approximately 40,000 cars drive the Bluff Street Corridor currently; in 2040 that number is projected at 65,000, which puts the level of service to an E which is failing in UDOT's eyes.

Dana Meyer with UDOT explained that when MPO runs the traffic demand model, they have a long range plan. They design what they need to maintain level of service D.

Mr. Anderson stated that with regard to widening Bluff Street, they have come up with a new concept called a super street that will impact fewer businesses. This interim solution will get them to 2030 – 2035. He explained that Colorland is defined as a historic property, so they will design around that.

Myron Lee with the MPO explained that from a long range planning prospective, doing the interim project that gets them out to 2030, they will have to redo the project in 15 years. It will be easier to find the money now rather than later.

Mr. Anderson commented that the right of way will be purchased now but will be built later.

Mr. Meyer explained that they do not know what transportation and facilities will look like in 15 years. There may not be a need to implement a super street in 2040.

Mr. Anderson continued with the expectations for the next 6 months and for the next 6+ months. They have funded \$20 million for the Sunset Boulevard project.

Mr. Meyer stated that he understands that citizens believe the numbers are incorrect. He

explained that they have automatic traffic recorders. One of which was located between St. George Boulevard and Sunset. Although that particular recorder was relocated south of St. George Boulevard in 2008, their website still said it was recording at the old location. They have done additional studies and are confident the numbers are accurate.

City Manager Gary Esplin stated that the assumption is that there will be development to the north. He asked if the model takes land ownership, density and projected growth rate into consideration.

Mr. Lee explained that the model does not add in much growth north of The Ledges. It uses the growth projections from the Governor's office of Planning Management. The rate is 3½ percent growth moving forward which has been accused of being low in this area. If the growth projections are low, the numbers will be hit sooner than projected.

Mayor Pike commented that City Manager Gary Esplin's point of land ownership is critical.

Mr. Lee explained that they have taken population projections and looked at current land use plans. If the lands were to be developed as they are currently zoned, they feel their model works with the current land use plans through 2040.

PRESENTATION FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

Gregg McArthur with the Chamber of Commerce provided a handout outlining their proposed offices. He explained that they are looking to utilize the old water conservancy district building. Their plan is to have Hendriksen Butler do the interior and the furniture. They have been fundraising and now have the funds to move forward.

City Manager Gary Esplin advised that the original concept would be that the Chamber would make the improvements at their cost. He asked Mr. McArthur how long of a lease they would like. Previously, the issue was what was going to be done with the existing building. Staff would like to see the building used.

Councilmember Arial commented that the Chamber of Commerce is an anchor for the community. This is really exciting.

City Manager Gary Esplin commented that he sees this as a win-win situation. He has not discussed staffing of the existing building.

Mr. McArthur explained that they would like the existing building to be a St. George visitor's center.

City Manager Gary Esplin stated that long term, there is a need to do additional improvements. The historic nature and character of the building would not be altered.

Mayor Pike asked City Manager Gary Esplin to have the Legal Department draft an agreement.

REPORTS FROM MAYOR, COUNCILMEMBERS AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmembers Almquist, Bowcutt and Randall had nothing to report.

Councilmember Hughes mentioned the Point in Time Count.

Councilmember Arial mentioned the Arts Council and several other groups were discussing the Electric Theater. They would like to know what constitutes the Downtown Arts District.

City Manager Gary Esplin explained that they are supposed to make the recommendation to the City Council. Additionally, they should decide where the pieces of art that have been purchased by the City are to be placed.

Mayor Pike mentioned that the Dixie Rebels have changed their name to Zion Lions Football. To purchase a season pass, patrons buy a hat or a t-shirt on their website. They propose to have nine home games at the Sunbowl and would also like to practice there. The details for their use of the Sunbowl will have to be worked out. Lockers and showers would have to be provided for the visiting teams; they propose to use the Recreation Center.

City Manager Gary Esplin stated that he spoke with Kent Perkins about additional uses for the Sunbowl.

Mayor Pike mentioned that Art Around the Corner is still under budget with all that they purchased. Since they are under budget, they asked to purchase another piece.

The consensus of the Councilmembers is to allow Art Around the Corner to purchase the piece if Councilmember Arial okays it.

Councilmember Arial asked if the Sunbowl can be used as a flea market.

Mayor Pike stated that would have to be looked at.

Ed Baca, citizen, asked if the public would be able to watch the Zion Lion's practices.

Mayor Pike stated that he will find out.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION:

MOTION: A motion was made by Councilmember Randall to adjourn to a closed session to discuss potential litigation.

SECOND: The motion was seconded by Councilmember Arial.

VOTE: Mayor Pike called for a roll call vote, as follows:

Councilmember Almquist – aye
Councilmember Hughes – aye
Councilmember Randall – aye
Councilmember Bowcutt – aye
Councilmember Arial – aye

The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

The meeting reconvened at approximately 6:15 p.m.

City Manager Gary Esplin advised that Randy Wilkinson would like to create a CDA in the downtown area. That would entail the City giving the business a subsidy. If a CDA is going to be created, it should be taken all the way out to Smith's. Someone would have to be hired to create the CDA. The City does not give tax credits to businesses.

Mayor Pike commented that this is a dangerous precedent. He would like to let Washington County School District Superintendent Larry Bergeson know that the City is not pushing this. He does not want to abuse the partnership with the School District.

City Manager Gary Esplin updated the Councilmembers on the train for the All abilities Park. He asked the Councilmembers what direction staff should take with regard to RAP tax projects. Additionally, he updated the Councilmembers on possible RAP tax projects.

Councilmember Hughes mentioned that the tennis courts at Hidden Valley Park are in bad shape.

City Manager Gary Esplin explained how the RAP tax funds are received by the City.

Chief Stratton explained that Sergeant Gilman sits on a suicide prevention coalition. At the last meeting, they discussed recognition awareness for suicide prevention in the form of a flash mob. He read an email received from Bruce Solomon, who is also a member of the coalition, explaining what the flash mob would do. He told Sergeant Gilman that he is not comfortable with their request.

City Manager Gary Esplin stated that he appreciates the fact that they want to create awareness; but this is not the way to do it.

The consensus of the Councilmembers is to not allow this request.

The meeting then adjourned.